A Specimen of the Method the *Presbyterians* take to answer all Arguments against their Errors.

THE Author of the Paper, called *The Practice and Doctrine of the Presbyterian Preachers about the Sacrament of Baptism, examined:* finds that he had great reason to crave of that Party a solid and satisfactory Answer, in stead of Clamour and Calumny: For, in their Printed *Character* of those who plead for *Toleration*, paragr. 12. He is charg'd

First, With Asserting the Popish Doctrine of the necessity of Baptism to Salvation. Upon what is this heavy Charge founded? The Popish Doctrine in the Article is, That no un-baptiz'd person is saved any manner of way. The Author of that Paper says only, That *Un-baptized persons are not saved on the ordinary covenanted Gospel Terms of Salvation.*

One would think, that the learned Advocats for Presbytery, might have seen (if they had pleas'd) the wide difference between *This* and *That*. But it seems these Gentlemen, (learn'd as they are) cannot distinguish between the boundless Mercy of GOD, and the express conditions of his Covenant, made with Mankind in the Gospel; Between a Legal Title, and an Act of Grace; otherways they had not published such a Blunder in Print.

Secondly, The printed Character brings in the above-named Author granting, that the Presbyterians say, Baptism is necessary to Salvation, but not absolutely and indispensably. And yet he grants no such thing. On the contrary, he charges them with *the Error of the Non-necessity of Baptism to Salvation*, as their current Doctrine. And says only, *If what he urges them with, be found so pressing upon them, that they'l be forced to acknowledge Baptism necessary to Salvation,*

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&c. And he thinks they might see the difference here very great also.

Thirdly, he is charg'd with going about to prove Baptism absolutely and indispensably necessary to Salvation. And yet, he does not so much as once assert it. He only says, *That Baptism is so necessary to all who are, or will be saved* on the ordinary Covenanted *Gospel Terms of Salvation, that, without it, none are saved on these Terms.* And so vastly does he differ from the Popish Doctrine in that Article, that he says Expresly, *He hopes the Children of Christian Parents (for whom the Benefit of Baptism cannot be had) are saved, tho' not by the Ordinary means provided and instituted by our* B. Saviour *in the Gospel.*

But when the *Advocates* for Presbytery are put to a *Non-plus*, by the weighty *Arguments*, and solid Reasonings of the Episcopal Clergy against their Errors, their common Clamour is, that the said Clergy are Popish, or Popishly inclin'd. And it seems such a Calumny was judged needful here, in the absence of a better *Argument*, to prove the Charge.

But the Miss-represented *Author* Challenges all the Presbyterian Preachers in the Kingdom, to reconcile any thing asserted by him in that Paper, with the Popish Doctrine of the necessity of Baptism to Salvation, unless they also conclude all the Texts of the New Testament, relating to the Obligation of that *Sacred Rite* to be Popish: And if so, he is not asham'd for being condemned in Company with such *Authentick Evidences*. And therefore he positively affirms,

1. That Baptism, Ministred in the outward Symbol, is a Divine Evangelical Institution, delivered by our *B. Saviour* to his *Apostles*, as one of his great and last Commands, when he taught them the Things concerning his Kingdom.

2. That it is perpetually binding, and the Mistration of it not to be omitted as long as the Gospel Dispensation is in force.

3. That there is no ordinary Means (except Baptism) provided and Instituted by our *B. Saviour* in the Gospel, for cle.nsing

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cleanſing Infants from their Original Impurity, and putting them in a Salvable Condition; and therefore

4. That Infants dying without Baptiſm, are not ſaved on the ordinary Covenanted Goſpel Terms of Salvation.

And from theſe Premiſſes he concludes,

1. That it is an unacountable Cruelty in any, that takes upon him the Office of a Miniſter of the Goſpel, to deny the Benefit of Baptiſm to Poor Infants, whenſoever 'tis required. *And*

2. That it is a groſs Error to Teach, that Baptiſm is not neceſſary to Salvation; an Error which the Presbyterian Preachers are univerſally chargeable with.

Fourthly, The printed Character brings in the aforeſaid *Author* ſaying, If all the Nation were turn'd Presbyterian, 'tis to be fear'd, the Conſequent of ſuch a Doctrine would be the laying aſide the *Adminiſtration* of the Sacrament of Baptiſm, as an unneceſſary and indifferent Ceremony, with the Solemnity of a *Non-obſtante*. A moſt Candid Repreſentation indeed, of what the *Lybell'd Author* ſays! when the whole force of his *Argument* is anſwered with *Silence*, and that ſaying cut off from it, and brought in abruptly as a formidable Evidence againſt him, for touching his *Adverſaries* ſo unmannerly on the ſore Heel.

But that the *Authors Argument* againſt them may appear a ſecond time in it's full force, The Reader is deſired to obſerve, that, for the reaſonableneſs of fearing ſo Miſchievous a conſequent; he put the following Queſtions, *viz.*

1. *Why have our Presbyterian Brethren already, in great Meaſure* eſtabliſhed the Iniquity by a Law, *By making Acts in their General Aſſemblies againſt Baptizing Infants in private, that is in Houſes, not excepting ſuch as are in danger of Dying?*

2. *Why do they, in Obedience to thoſe Acts, ſuffer ſo many Infants to Die unbaptized, as is too well known they do in all parts of the Kingdom?*

3.

3. *Why do they generally refuse to Baptize in the very Churches, unless it be on a Preaching Day?*

4. *And ev'n when they are Preaching, why will they not be prevail'd with by any entreaties, to Baptize Infants expiring before Eyes, untill the Sermon is ended?* Of this ſeveral Inſtances can be given. And

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5. *Why do they Juſtify this horrid Cruelty to dying Infants by their Common Doctrine, publickly aſſerting,* That Baptiſm is not neceſſary to Salvation?

Upon theſe weighty *Queſtions of Fact*, the Miſ-repreſented Author, did found the reaſonableneſs of fearing (if all the Nation were Presbyterian) that they would wholly lay aſide the Adminiſtration of the Sacrament of Baptiſm, as an unneceſſary and indifferent Ceremony, with the Solemnity of a *Non obſtante*.

And if this be good Reaſoning *Now*, 'Twas ſo *Before*. And let all in the Nation (who think it a Mercy, to have their Poſterity Initiated in the Religion of the *Holy Jeſus*) look to it, and Judge, if ſuch a Conſequent is not too reaſonably to be feared, from ſuch Acts of General Aſſemblies, ſuch Practices in Obedience to theſe Acts, and ſuch a Doctrine in defence of Both.

And if our Presbyterian Brethren would evidence to the World, that they have not ſo pernicious a Deſign; The onely true way is, to repeal theſe Cruel Acts of their Aſſemblies. To adminiſter Baptiſm to Infants whenever there is occaſion; And to recant their Erronious Doctrine of the *Non-neceſſity of Baptiſm to Salvation*, as publickly and univerſally, as they have formerly taught it.

The Candid Reader is deſired to obſerve, that the printed Character takes no notice of their being charged by the aforeſaid Author, with the pernicious Error of adding to the Eſſentials of Faith in Baptiſm. It ſeems they find this Charge too hard for them; and therefore they anſwer it with ſilence and ſo, tacitely acknowledge that it is a groſs Error, and an Error peculiar to themſelves, and their late Predeceſſors.

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